



STARTing Line

2nd Quarter 2014

Volume 7-I

START Saving Program Sets Facebook Chat for 5/29

The Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) will observe national "5-29 Day" at night with its second annual "5-29 Day Facebook Chat" on Thursday, May 29 (5-29), from 6-9 p.m.

The "5-29" in "5-29 Day" refers to section 529 of the Internal Revenue Code which authorizes states to offer college saving plans that include substantial federal and state tax exemptions and other beneficial incentives to save. Louisiana's 529 plan is called the Student Tuition Assistance and Revenue Trust (START) saving program.

To participate in the online START Saving Plan Facebook Chat, Facebook users need to first "like" LOSFA's page. After doing so, questions may be submitted on the LOSFA page. LOSFA staff will be online to answer all questions as they are posted.

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LATTA Publishes START Saving Plan Interest Rates for 2013 Deposits

At its April 22 meeting, the Executive Committee of the Louisiana Tuition Trust Authority (LATTA) amended its program rules to publish certain START Saving program interest rates for deposits made during 2013 as determined by the State Treasurer.

The LATTA published an interest rate of 2.168% for START deposits made to the Louisiana Principal Protection Fund Option and an interest rate of 1.715% on accrued Earnings Enhancements for qualifying START investment options.

Deposits made to the Louisiana Principal Protection Fund Option are managed by the State Treasurer's Office and are invested in fixed earnings. The redemption value is guaranteed by the state and no administrative

fees or investment management fees are charged for Louisiana Principal Protection Fund deposits.

Earnings Enhancements represent the state matching funds of 2% to 14% paid annually based on prior year adjusted gross income and Account Owner Category. The balance, as of December 31, 2013, of all Earnings Enhancements accrued since the account was opened earned the additional 1.715% interest rate.

START also offers a number of variable earnings investment plan options that are managed by The Vanguard Group. The START Saving program is charged an investment management fee on monies invested in these options. It is possible that monies invested in variable earnings will lose value and investment returns are not guaranteed.

LOSFA Attends Woman's Hospital Baby Grand Event

On Saturday, May 3, 2014, Woman's Hospital held its annual Spring Baby Grand event. This event is geared toward mothers-to-be and helping them ease into the transition to motherhood. The event attracted more than 500 expectant mothers and their guests who were able to tour the hospital and attend various seminars. They were also able to receive valuable information from the various event sponsors.

LOSFA representatives were on hand to provide information about the START Saving Program. Attendees were happy to learn about the program and the numerous benefits it provides. Parents who had different 529 plans were eager to learn more about the earnings enhancements and tax deductions that their existing plans did not offer. Grandparents were thrilled to learn that they too could open accounts for the

new family additions and begin saving for their college educations. One grandmother talked about how her granddaughter is showered with toys and gifts for holidays and birthdays. She chooses to make deposits into her START account instead because she knows it's a gift that she'll need in the future.

Several account owners were in attendance and said that they were glad to see LOSFA at the event. They shared their stories about how the program was beneficial in getting their children through college and were eager to share their experiences with their fellow attendees. Earl E Start, the official mascot of the START Saving Program, was also in attendance. Earl was a hit with children and adults of all ages. Baby Grand attendees left the event with an abundance of information that will help them in the future.





LOSFA's Social Media



<http://www.facebook.com/LOSFA>



<http://www.twitter.com/LOSFA>



<http://www.youtube.com/LOSFA1000>



www.Flickr.com/LOSFA



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